were all a dark sinister crimson and gave out a suffocating smell of sulphurous gas. Our men urged us to "press the pace," for the friable, forbidding cliff face above looked as if it were not nearly done with shedding boulders. There is assuredly no myth more misleading than that of the "everlasting hills."

From river level[1] we could see the pin-scratch along the cliffs on our right, some 600 or 800 feet above the river, and, often as we had ridden the road before, it seemed incredible that it could be possible to round it. The cliffs on our left bore similar scratches, representing the Hunza road between the two oases of Mayun and Hindi. Poor starved-looking little places they seem in contrast to the rich Nagir ones. We chaffed our Hunzukuts that obviously the Nagir road up the gorge was the better one since Government had chosen it for the regular route. They rose at once to the bait: the Hunza road was really the better and well kept up—which we could quite believe since the Mir always travels it himself, not to trespass on Nagir territory more than he can help—it had only one slight drawback: there were seventeen places between the two oases where "shoots" were apt to carry it away.

As we scrambled our way along through the riverside boulders we noticed dozens of discarded millstones, some broken, some apparently perfect. Not that people bring their old millstones here to cast away! The opposing cliffs at this point happen to provide the best type of stone for mills, and, oddly, those on the Hunza side make the better nether millstones and those on the Nagir side the better upper ones (or it may be *vice versa*. David will have it accurately noted). When you want a new millstone you travel your ten or twenty miles or more to these cliffs, choose what seems the most promising boulder for your purpose, and with a rough bit of iron hack and chip it into a circle of the radius and depth required. You then bowl it home your ten or twenty or more miles like a child's hoop, up ravines and across gorges to your mill. If it hasn't broken as you fashioned it, which it frequently does—this explains the number of discarded millstones that here strew the countryside—it may very likely break on the rude road home. If so, you just go back and carve yourself another.

1 [The Hunza River—Ed.]

SETTLING IN

Our chief lack at first was shelves and cupboards, but as soon as we had seen what was most needed and what could be accommodated David got busy with rulers and squared paper and drew up detailed specifications, which he sent to the Divisional Engineer's office in Gilgit. They were able to make us the skeletons and send them up in such form that we needed only to screw them together. I then nailed cloth over the back of the cupboards and hung curtains over the front so that we no longer needed to live in the misery of half-unpacked boxes.

The bow window of the study where we sat to smoke and take tea looked out on to a jolly little watercourse (about 2 feet wide) which chattered merrily along. On its farther bank is a row of apricot and mulberry trees which, if they break the view a bit, also provide some welcome shade. From the foot of the trees terraced fields fall away, down, down, down to the top of the great cliff—some 500 feet or so—that forms the right bank of the river. We looked right across the gorge (the river, of course, is entirely out of sight, and nothing would lead you to guess its existence if you hadn't just had to cross it) to stark, magnificently seamed mountains, with tiny fans of green here and there, which are other villages similar to Aliábád on the Nagir side.

The nearer side of our little stream was one of the main highways; and all the life of the place went on in full view of our window. People passed by all day, laden with green fodder for their beasts, or carrying baskets of ripe apricots to dry. The nearest field of lucerne had just been reaped, and then below it the barley field, and we watched them stack the barley and make a circular threshing floor on which to deal with it. They flooded a patch of the newly reaped field, built a little circular wall of mud about four inches high round it, then flooded it twice more, and then when it was nearly dry a whole family, from grandfather down to the small boys and girls, systematically tramped it down with their bare feet till the surface was as smooth and level as a hard tennis court.

Jolly youngsters of all sizes romped in the new-cut fields, snowballed each other with clods of dry earth, tripped each

Chapter 14

FIRST WALKS ABROAD

THE very day after our arrival we went out for a stroll to take stock of our immediate surroundings. Along the Dála, the little stream which ran in front of our house, there is a tiny foot-path, just wide enough for one. On our right was the channel in its carefully made bed with a stone revetting wall above it holding up the field above; on our left a fine hedge of quick-thorn to keep passing beasts from jumping into the field 4 or 5 feet below. We could hear a merry sound of drums and pipes coming from somewhere downhill, and asked what was on. It seemed that just before we arrived the first barley-cutting had been celebrated with various ceremonies, which we could only hope to see in detail next year, and some of the jollification was still being kept up. Qudrat Ullah was with us, and a "levy." I must explain the levies. In most villages Government chooses, no doubt on the Mir's advice, one or two of the most respected peasant-farmers who are not head-men or officials of the Mir himself, and pays them a small (very small) monthly wage so that they may be ready to do any little Government jobs that are wanted. There are three in Aliábád, which is relatively a large place with about two hundred scattered houses, and the Political Agent had kindly instructed them that one of their jobs was to be useful to us. I may as well at once introduce the two first: Kalbi is a fine upstanding man, rather darker in colour than the average; and Hurmat, a younger, very cheery fellow with dashing mous-taches. They are both intelligent and extremely friendly and eager to help. We didn't see why they should waste time on us for nothing, so David at once agreed with them that he

624 would pay them a small retaining fee if they would take it in
124 turns to be "on duty" with him in their spare time. They would obviously be useful informants.

487 We had to walk along in single file. There is no "road" in
312 Hunza where two people can walk abreast, or along which you can ride, except the "Great North Road" running through from Kashmir to Kashgar, and even it is never more than 4 to 6 feet wide. The other tracks run mostly beside small water-channels to enable people to get from one sluice to another to juggle the water now off, now on. Even when you have a neat little track fairly horizontal (there are only three of these possible for ordinary walking) it is broken every few yards by a sluice which you must jump or step over carefully so as not to interfere with the water arrangements or, alternatively, break your leg. The sluices are the simplest things imaginable—just a gap in the side wall of the channel which can be closed with a couple of convenient, slab-like stones and plastered up with mud from the watercourse. Occasionally there is a little wooden shutter which can be raised or lowered in wooden slots at the side.

As we went along David asked the names of the various kinds of water-channels, fields, etc., that we saw (the *names* he already knew, but not at first hand which kind was which), and presently we had a train of bright-eyed boys in the fields on each side, full of amusement at this new game. One would cry: "This stone is a flint; this is a stink-stone," whereupon he would crack it and give it to us to notice the faint smell of sulphur it gave out. Another would run up: "Here's a poppy and a poppy-head"—so we were not going to lack for willing teachers.

After a little we turned down a narrow "lane," less like an English lane than anything else on earth. It plunged downhill pretty steeply, sometimes just a rocky slope, sometimes just one boulder below another making a very crude flight of steps varying from 18 inches to 3 feet or so. Beside the "path" ran the inevitable water-gutter in which you could walk, as it happened at the moment to be dry.

417 On each side, a bare 3 feet apart, were the usual walls of
323

2: Lorimer T-3 (1920-4; 1934-5) 1939 AV7 Buzuho AV7

400

1. Street scene. Children carrying new-born lambs and kids in their arms to display them to us on our return from Yasin. (See p. 181)

PLATE XII

312
● 487

2. The Dida, typical road-cum-watercourse, flanked by field wall. (See pp. 83, 93)

[Facing P. 128]

600 backs. They all thought it rather a thrill to come along and see me safe home and hang about for a salaam to David before they dashed off to some fresh amusement.

• 487 As soon as DL was better I began exploring further afield. At first I used to be a little shy of just barging down any rocky track that seemed to end up in someone's back yard. But these tracks are all public ways, and just when you think you have reached a cul-de-sac and are about to plunge into a house, the path gives a sudden twist and leads you on.

576 No matter how far I strayed from home and my well-known families, the people came up to their garden walls or out on to their flat roofs—crowds of them sometimes—to shout a welcome and good wishes, and to ask where I was going to and what I was doing. This is the recognized Hunza greeting, not a fatuous, unanswered "How do you do?" countered by another. The answer is: "I'm going to fetch firewood from the orchard," or "I'm getting some green stuff for the cow," or "I've been taking the beasts to water," or "I'm off to get some grain ground at the mill," or "I've been spending the day with mother's people." No one "goes for a walk" to get exercise after a futile day of sitting still. So I was driven to reply that I had come "to see the country." "And a good idea, too," they would respond politely; "and do you like it?" Then I could truthfully say how beautiful it was, and how much I admired their walls, and what lovely air and water and fruit they have, but that most of all I liked the friendly people. Then they grinned with pleasure. When I sometimes risked a short cut and found myself at the top of a huge wall with no visible means of getting further, a kindly man or boy would leave his work to come and point out the almost invisible flight of projecting stones or pull down a side wall to let me out into a tiny lane, and always he would offer his hand to help me. I duly thanked him and perhaps added apologetically: "We haven't walls like yours in our country, and I'm not very good at climbing them." "No, and of course you've got shoes on," he would say sympathetically, "and you're not young."

133 Twice I found my way down to the very edge of the river bank. The river itself, grey and rock-tossed it looked, dashing

2: Lorimer T-3 (1920-4; 1934-5) 1939 AV7 Burusho AV7

homes, and the women know no other. The existence of this interesting language-island, within the language-island of Burushaski, had been unsuspected by European scholars till DL set about investigating it. He could not devote much time to it, but gleaned enough to establish the fact—inherently probable—that it is of Indian origin, and that it has (less predictably) interesting affinities with the Gypsy of Europe, which survives even in South Wales. It is a curious fact that the Doms of Gilgit (who conjecturally are of the same stock as the Doms of India and the Béricho of Hunza) have abandoned their own language in favour of Shina. This may well be because Shina has a close relationship to Sanskrit and the modern Indian vernaculars, which Burushaski lacks, and is incomparably easier to learn.

While every Hunza family plies its own essential crafts, there are a few specially expert folk—like the master-carpenters of whom I have spoken—who undertake the weaving, turning, and milling for their neighbours. Amongst the two hundred families of Aliábád there were perhaps seven or eight recognized weavers, twice as many millers, and at least one lathe-master.

We were fortunate in having, on the Middle Channel above us within a few minutes' climb, two master-weavers, old Dádo of No. 7 and Ustád Nadíro of No. 8. The narrow road-plus-water-channel that passed their houses was barely 3 feet wide, and was one of the main internal thoroughfares; but this had not prevented them from digging themselves a loom-pit under the shelter of the house wall, leaving an effective track of scarcely a foot for passers-by to squeeze along, cows, sheep, goats, or people. No one seemed to resent the encroachment. At a pinch you could always step down into the water-channel, full or empty as it might chance. During the pressure of harvest these pits had stood untenanted, and I wondered when the weaving was going to begin.

One day I had been sitting with one of Afiato's daughters-in-law, who was embroidering a festive cap for herself, asking the names of the various stitches and patterns and studying her style of sewing. There is a huge vocabulary connected with

2: Lorimer T-3 (1920–4; 1934–5) 1939 AV7 Burusho AV7

flies—a copper-coloured fritillary and a tiny blue. The road was a very different proposition from what it had been as we travelled up the previous July. From richly watered Minapin we looked across the river to the Hunza village of Hindi with new eyes, for various fields were pointed out as belonging to one or another of our acquaintances. "Hindi is a fine place," they told us; adding without conscious irony: "There's hardly any water, but otherwise . . ." From the Nagir side the Hindi road looks pretty terrifying (as, of course, the Nagir road must also look from the Hunza side), but we were assured that it was really a better road; its only drawback is that there are fifty recognized spots on it subject to rock bombardments: a mere nothing amongst these ever-crumbling hills.

The onward journey was uneventful. At Sikandarabad and Chalt all the apricots were in full bloom—a glorious sight. After Chalt there was one part of the road completely buried under an avalanche which we had some difficulty in coaxing our horses over, we ourselves scrambling across on foot. A good deal of intermittent rain for a couple of days and a horrid ride in driving wind and sand on the last lap rather spoiled our ride to Gilgit. Just before we reached the Gilgit river we were staggered by a magnificent view of Nanga Parbat filling a whole triangular gap in the nearer mountains. Often as we had ridden this stretch before, we had never happened to see her like this.

In Gilgit (2,000 or 3,000 feet lower than Hunza) all the apricot blossom was already over, though a few peaches and apples were still in flower. We had a delightful (but from the work point of view wholly wasted) ten days in Gilgit. Nothing could have exceeded the kindness of Major and Mrs. Kirkbride, who put us up in the Agency House. It was odd to be quartered in the guest room of what had been for four years "our" house, and odder still, but delightful, to attend the Jalsa as guests and spectators instead of responsible hosts. The British officers as new friends and our old friends the Chiefs all treated us with the utmost kindness, and the ten-day holiday was extremely pleasant.

On April 4th we resumed our pilgrimage to Yasin. We imagined we had forgotten the road. Far from it: every detail

2: Lorimer T-3 (1920-4; 1934-5) 1939 AV7 Baruho AV7

presence there. It was tantalizing to delay our return to headquarters; on the other hand, since in common courtesy the visit must some time be paid, we had promised to visit Nagir before returning to Aliábád, so we remained on the Nagir side of the river and proceeded to that gloomy, sunless capital.

At Minapin, the last stage before Hunza or Nagir, as the case might be, we were met by a laughing, bright-eyed boy, too genial to be a Nagir product: it was Haiyáto's son (one of three) who had come the fourteen miles to meet his father, explaining "I was heartsick for you and the horse, my father."

Ernest, Dádo, and Qudrat Ullah had never been in Nagir before, and were much amused at seeing Hunza from across the water. Everything *did* look odd, Aliábád beacon-tower very imposing above the empty, graveyard hill. Nagir is more spacious and richer than I had remembered. The fields are all slightly sloping and the revetting walls not nearly so high or so well-built as those of Hunza. The houses, like the Gilgit houses, are mainly built of sun-dried brick, and looked tidy and neat. Upper balconies are rare, and it seemed to me that the smoke-holes were much smaller and usually at one side of the roof, but the roofs appeared to have a parapet of a foot or so all round. The villages, so familiar in profile from the Hunza side, are much deeper than their appearance from the distance would suggest. The path from Sumair onwards up the Nagir gorge was very narrow, crumbly, and in poor repair, but looking at the texture of the cliffs it was not easy to see how anything radical could be done to improve it unless the course of it were entirely altered and carried much higher up and over the top of various bluffs and crags: an expensive engineering feat. Presently we came to an ugly *zhingát* on a long stretch of steep, almost fluid rubbish-heap slope—a place well remembered in my nightmares—across which the track, such as it was, was a bare 18 inches wide, and not even level at that. It is a good quarter of a mile; we took it on foot at the double, and were thankful to reach comparative safety at the other side, and see our horses and men follow without mishap. There is no shame in funking these things; the natives like them as little as we, and are as frank about it. Familiarity with a

2; Lorimer T-3 (1920-4; 1934-5) 1939 AV7 Burusho AV7

zhingát breeds caution, not contempt. As we rode in we saw 487
Ali Ausat at the nicely carved door of his house, rather grubby
but pleased to see us, passed the miserable apology for a [743]
hospital which contrasts ill with the well-built one at Aliábád,
though the two Mirs got the same grant from Government
for the purpose of building them, and on past a fine, large,
shallow pond. On our right was a steep green slope with jolly
poplars and a lot of grass, and then we reached the polo-
ground. Here the Mir came himself to meet us from the
shelter of a roofed summer-house where he had been waiting.
Another mile of almost perpendicular zigzag, which the ponies
could only just manage, brought us to the familiar old polo-
ground (now disused for play), with its lovely double line of
poplars. This peculiarly steep and horrible approach is new,
and the Mir is very proud of it. From the top there is a mag- 644
nificent view with the pond below looking like a lake and the 643
Mir's palace picturesquely perched on a steep hill-face with
fine windows looking out not at any view but straight into
the terraced hillside opposite. Mir Sikandar Khan looked
shrunken and frail compared with ten years ago, but very brisk,
and was apparently able to ride up his new road without a
qualm.

He himself received us most hospitably and kindly, but his [511]
people serve him ill. Immediately on our arrival a shindy broke
out with talk of grass- and fodder-shortage, though grass and
fodder are plentiful in Nagir, and we found the rest-house
dirty and unswept, bathroom and utensils uncared for, and a
general atmosphere of grudging incompetence pervading it.

We dined with the Mir that evening and duly entertained 643
him in return, while I paid a visit to the ladies and met the
numerous little princes and princesses. The Queen of Nagir,
a fine, handsome woman, not a day older than when I had last
seen her eleven years ago, is a sister of Khan Sahib Mir Baz
Khan of Yasin, and I was able to bring her first-hand news of
her brother and his family, in which it is fair to say she did not
seem over-interested. But she is a gracious motherly woman,
and very intelligent—she even followed my Burushaski (Hunza
variety) with ease. The brightest moments of my call were

2; Lorimer T-3 (1920-4; 1934-5) 1939 AV7 Burusho AV7

487 To revert to our homeward journey: After descending the Mir's famous new road on foot (it was so steep that our people voluntarily carried the loads down and loaded the animals below) we rode as far as the perilous *zhingát*, then dismounted and scooted across it in undignified but prudent haste. It was actively streaming pebbles, and at the safer spots where a bush or an apparently well-rooted boulder sheltered the track, we halted, looked, and waited to make sure that nothing larger was coming and then ran for it. A biggish stone or boulder takes three to four seconds after it is sighted to reach the track, and you must use your judgment and gamble on your chances. We felt a little anxious till we saw that all our people and kit were safely over too. Under a small new half-built mosque we halted in the shade to drink some thermos tea. The owner of the land, an intelligent man, courteously came up and offered to spread bedding for us to sit on; there were some children about but they were shy and churlish and unresponsive to our advances. The ride through the villages was pleasant; there are lovely big trees in Nagir (such as Hunza 241 cannot afford), and lashings of water. The fact that the Nagirkuts don't level their fields completely, but allow them to be on a fairly steep slope, seems to entail a much more elaborate system of ridging and much more trampling through the crops to direct the water. We wondered whether it really saved trouble after all.

487 Presently we came to the long Shayár *zhingát* just opposite Aliábád, though so many dusty miles away by road. We had had it under observation for many months from our windows, and knew that in fact boulder bombardments down it were rare, though very thorough and impressive when they did occur. Still, it is always a nasty business. Like the other one, it was trickling actively, but the surface of the track across it was wide and fair, so we rode at it as always before. We were about half-way across when Haiyáto looked up and saw puffs of dust above us indicating the marksmanship of falling stones. He shouted "Ride for your life, Sahib!" and stupidly got so excited as to frighten the horses, who, without any additional incentive, are always nervous and jumpy on these mountain shoots. I know few feelings more unpleasant than the trembling

2: Lorimer T-3 (1920-4; 1934-5) 1939 AV7 Burusho AV7

between your knees of a frightened horse. We put the animals into a quick trot—anything faster only invites stumbling—and got happily across without accident, though some quite nasty rocks were falling at intervals. All the rest got over safely too. We were not sorry when this bit of the road, was behind us. These two Nagir *zhingáts* are to my mind the ugliest bits of road in the Agency. They don't look nearly as sensational as the many *peris*—which can, of course, be dangerous enough at times—but a firm shelf, however high and narrow, is preferable to a shifting surface.

Somewhere below us under the cliffs on the Nagir side of the river gorge, but out of sight of the road, is the Hakúchar spring, where Hunza and Nagir royal ladies occasionally go into camp together for a few days. It was pleasant to think that the young princesses, married across the water into the related family of the hereditary foe, are able to meet their own womenfolk in privacy from time to time. When such a party is arranged five large tents are pitched there for them.

It was very hot slithering down the powdery spiral descent to river level, riding along the sea-beach to the bridge and then mounting the long Hunza zigzag to Murtazábád, but once there we came again into the welcome shade of apricots and *gindáwer* (jujube trees, I think). I very much wished that some of our own family could have been with us to see our arrival "home." Never in the days when DL was Political Agent and was popularly believed to have money and offices in his gift did we get such a reception. Though we were forty-eight hours ahead of our programme, the news that we were coming had got all round the countryside. Our easily identifiable little procession had, of course, been seen crawling for hours along the Nagir mountain side. Four miles out from Aliábád, on the hither side of the great Hasanabad Nullah, the advance guard met us: two small boys of six or seven had pattered out on their bare feet to be the first to welcome us. A few hundred yards farther on another little pair; next the three levies, who were, of course, to a small extent in our pay (they got the princely sum of nine rupees a month every third month when they came "on duty"!), and then at the bridge at the bottom.

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The road-cum-waterchannel on which our nearest neighbours lived.

(See p. 114)

PLATE XXI
Facing P. 250

2: Lorimer T-3 (1920-4; 1934-5) 1939 AV7 Burusho AV7

original right-hand loops off on to the left fingers carefully crossing each pair of threads as she does so. Widely drawing her two hands apart Apícho then drove the set of crossed threads down on to the edge of the cap, where Kaníza secured the twelve-fold plait with a large stitch. This was repeated *ad infinitum*, the braid only showing on the right side of the cap and the long ugly stitches on the wrong. The process looks rather like cat's-cradle. I had always wondered why, when they take such infinite trouble over the minute cross-stitch embroidery of their caps and the hand-plaited twelve-ply braid, they finished the cap off with these long stitches. I also wondered why it seemed impossible to detach the braid without its ravelling out. I now saw that braid-weaving and stitching were part of one elaborate process.

By July 1st the luckier folk were already cutting their barley and clearing a field for their threshing floor without waiting for the formal harvest-initiation ceremonies of the Ginání, the date of which is naturally fixed by the Mir to suit Báltít, 1,500 feet higher, and consequently some days behind Aliábád. All our potatoes were by now in full flower and our wheat was turning "fox-colour."

On July 5th we rode over to Báltít for yet another of the Hunza festivals, and ye Gods! it was hot on the road—90 degrees in the shade—and we had to start at the very hottest time of day, about 2 p.m. The Mir gave us tea in his nice shady grass-grown apple orchard before we remounted and climbed up to the Fort. It is not easy to convey how steep the road is that in Báltít corresponds to the Mall. Your pony steps from one boulder to the next with a great lurch, his spine almost vertical, and for my part I could only just stick on by my usual technique of thrusting my stirrups back to the root of his tail and firmly gripping his mane with my right hand. The road runs between high stone walls and zigzags wildly. The little box-like stone houses of the capital are piled on top of each other in the craziest way—town-planning has to accommodate itself to the vagaries of a precipitous mountain side. They are indescribably picturesque, but you would not think them possible to live in, yet they provide a high degree of simple comfort.

● 487 fort. When you reach the courtyard the Fort towers above you like Bush House. Up the semi-spiral ramp outside and the two flights of ladder-like stairs, and out you come on to the great reception balcony with its incomparable view. The country looks its very best in July, every field green or golden with its crops and every fruit tree in full luxuriant leaf, apricots turning golden but not yet ripe.

600 There was a crowd of fifty or sixty on the balcony, and we chatted to the princes and others while DL endeavoured to find some spot from which he could command with his cine-camera the steep approach almost vertically below us up which the Harvest procession would presently be coming, without himself toppling over to certain death. The little parapet—not calculated for the convenience of camera men—just caught his shins in such a way as to encourage a fatal plunge. It is needless to mention that the sinking sun stared straight into his lens. The sun blazed relentlessly on the white mud floor of the balcony, the resultant glare alternating with inky shadows, while the table and chairs which had been hospitably provided for our convenience intruded with infernal incongruity into every foreground. If you escaped sudden death over the parapet to rocks 1,000 feet below, you might meet a less spectacular but equally fatal end by an unpremeditated dive down the trap-door. Photography in Hunza is fraught with danger and difficulty.

643 The Mir meantime had disappeared inside to robe himself before taking his seat on the throne under the carved verandah, where he would be well-nigh invisible to the camera lens. The cloth spread on the throne was the loveliest imaginable: a thick, bright sapphire-blue velvet with a border of apricot colour, or rather that delicate, yellowy, salmony pink which upholsterers call "apricot," though never was an apricot that shade. The whole border as well as a great medallion in the centre was embroidered in real gold, padded quarter of an inch thick: a barbarically lovely thing, bought, the Mir said, for Lord Curzon's visit twenty or thirty years ago, and as untarnished still as only real gold can be.

At last, when we were nearly grilled to death, we heard a

3: Lorimer L-3 (1920-4; 1934-5) 1935 AV7 Burusho AV7

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The road between Chalt and Nilt.
The Hunza River below. Looking Eastwards.

End Plate 5

3: Lorimer L-3 (1920-4; 1934-5) 1935 AV7 Burusho AV7

123 Hispār, Barpu and other large glaciers. Henceforth until Chalt is reached, where it turns South, the river forms the boundary between Hunza on the North and Nagir on the South. Chalt itself and the Chaprōt valley which debouches into it belong to Nagir. Otherwise Nagir is confined, generally speaking, to the valley of the Hispar glacier and Nagir river and the northern slopes of the Kailas range, the crest of which forms the dividing line between it and Gilgit.

On the extreme East Hunza marches with the Oprang valley in Chinese territory and southwards with Baltistan, but the mountain range which separates these regions is scarcely surmountable (v. Text XXVIII). On the extreme West again, Hunza and Nagir territory terminates on a lofty range which runs roughly North and South and is only traversable with difficulty by a couple of passes, the Chillinji (17,000 ft.) and the Daintar (15,210). Beyond lies the sparsely-inhabited valley of Ishkoman, which again is bounded on its western side by a North and South range of mountains on the further side of which is situated the Wershigūm valley, known officially as the Yasin 'Ilāqa. This Wershigum valley is the habitat of the Werchikwār language, a variant form of Burushaski, to which brief reference is made in this work.

133 From the West of Hunza to the East of Wershigum is as the
487 crow flies a mere 20 or 30 miles, but the traveller will spend six days and cover some 115 miles in making his way from Chalt via Gilgit and Gupis to Yasin. Such is this country where cross-country travel is impossible and practicable routes can be found only by following the natural lines of least resistance, and that not without pain.

361 I have now placed our language on the map, approximately, but
162 greater precision is required. In the first place we have to take account of the fact that the bulk of Hunza and the eastern portion of Nagir are uninhabited and uninhabitable. Permanent population exists only on the elevated terraces that skirt in places the sides of the river valleys.

7:Tobe C, T-3 (1959)1960 AV7 Burusho AV7
Hunza

from India was on this religious basis.

However, records clearly indicate that Hunza had for many years enjoyed a pleasant relationship and trade with her Chinese neighbors through the Province of Singkiang. History shows that for ages the caravans moved continually from Kashgar, Urumchi and Yarkand down through Hunza and on to Gilgit, Peshawar, Afghanistan, Persia and further westward.

Hunza in those days used a lot of rice, which came from China. Wheat has practically completely replaced rice.

If this gives rise to the impression that Hunza was not as self-sufficient as you imagined, I am sorry, but I am dealing with facts and not myths . . . unless they are so identified. I don't believe nor does data prove that, while caravans moved from Turkestan through Hunza, there was any great trade or barter between the people of Hunza and Turkestan.

But because of the regular movement of these caravans across Hunza territory, it is easy to comprehend that most of the things the Hunzans would use and require would come from China and there would be a strong Chinese or Turkic influence in the area. Upon checking closely into the records and history, I found that the Chinese district bordering Hunza was also principally Mohammedan in religion as are most of the Turkic peoples. Mir Nazim Khan states clearly in his autobiography that the Mir of Hunza had possession of vast acreages in China along the Yarkand River, on which roamed herds of yaks and other domestic beasts. (It wasn't China then as they had not yet claimed it.)

The Mirs of Hunza have for many years—in fact, from time immemorial—paid tribute to the Chinese government at Kashgar. From the records that I have been able to find, they paid tribute to Kashgar long

7:Tobe C,T-3 (1959)1960 AV7 Burusho AV7
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175 before the Chinese government took control of that
648 region. (By that I mean, while it was still in the hands of what is known as the Turki.)

This quotation from the autobiography of Nazim Khan will serve to illustrate the point in question:

"Two years later Colonel Bruce came to Gilgit as temporary British Agent and he told me that the Government had decided that I might still pay my annual tribute to China. To this, however, I demurred as I pointed out to him that having relations with both was like sitting between two stools. He, however, retorted that if this was the case and one stool broke there was always the other to sit on and that no suspicion would attach to me as long as there were friendly relations between the British Government and the Emperor of China. He did make one stipulation, though, and that was that I should let the Political Agent in Gilgit see the letter that accompanied the toll, before it was despatched."

In turn, the Chinese sent a friendly troop of soldiers to Hunza every year with gifts for the Mir and rich, luxurious gifts they were!

175 Now this may sound very strange, almost ridiculous
648 but nevertheless, it is absolutely true. And the reason
487 is simple and easy to understand if you will but follow me. The road through Hunza was by far the shortest route to Gilgit, Rawalpindi, Peshawar, Kabul and Persia as well as Srinagar in Kashmir and other parts of India. Elsewhere along the route the caravans could travel with immunity and safety but in Hunza even the largest caravan—yes, even one protected by gun bearers or soldiers—could easily come to grief. All that would be required would be a few men hidden away in the upper reaches on the slopes to begin dropping stones or to start a landslide at a given moment.

As that entire 200 miles from the Chinese border to Nomal is composed chiefly of this type of terrain, unless a caravan had a guarantee of safe conduct, they just couldn't get through. 175 648 [487]

The Mir was the ruler of Hunza and he held full and complete control over his tribesmen. So what could be more natural and understandable than an annual payment of tribute to the Mir for safe conduct? I know for a fact that right up until the time when the Chinese Communists took over the Singkiang District, the Mir still received a share of the cargo carried by the caravans traveling through Hunza. [643] [487]

Therefore it is my conclusion that the ways, the habits and the mode of life of the people of Hunza were patterned more after the Chinese than the Indians. Further, I suspect that they did a lot more trading with the caravans that came through regularly than they ever did at Gilgit. In one instance the caravans came to them and in the other case they had to go down to Gilgit . . . anywhere from 40 to 200 or so miles away, through the tough mountain roads. 175 648 439 [177]

It was in November 1947, when Pakistan seized part of Kashmir from India by an armed revolt. The circumstances that brought about this event are worth recording and I believe you will have greater understanding of the people of Hunza and Pakistan if you know the story. 175 648

The Pakistanis claim that the Province of Kashmir should belong to Pakistan because the Indian government had agreed to allow all the predominantly Moslem districts to secede and become a part of the newly formed country of Pakistan. Therefore, Kashmir which is more than 90 per cent Moslem should be a part of the Mohammedan nation. Eventually, when partition took place, Kashmir was not permitted out of the fold

000 with the Rani and his brother and, after the usual sumptuous breakfast, Sultan Ali joined us and the three of us—Jahangir, Sultan Ali and I—took off to Altit. As we left the Mir said, "I'll be waiting here for you and you'll ride the yaks right into the palace yard."

"You'll find the yaks very easy and comfortable to ride," continued the Mir. "What's more—you won't notice the ascents and descents!"

"You're kidding!" I rejoined.

"No, I'm not," he said. "It's true . . . just wait and you'll see!"

133 It was approximately a 2 mile jaunt to Altit and the 487 terrain was very much like the terrain we had en- 491 countered all the way up from Gilgit—washouts, rock slides, boulders strewn all over the place. This all made walking difficult, at least for me.

491 Now I don't want you to get the idea that when these landslides or rock slides occur they are just left where they fall, because that is the furthest thing from the truth. Immediately after these things happen, crews are put on to get things straightened away. But when you take into consideration that each speck of work is done manually and that they do not have even a wheelbarrow, you can then understand that the job is a difficult one and one that is back-breaking and requires much time.

The only implements I saw them use on the roads were a sort of pinch-bar or wedge and a sledge hammer. You see, they don't have dynamite and when a huge boulder lands smack in the middle or at the side of the road and can't be pushed off, the only other course to follow is to break it into small pieces. Those are the ways and means here of getting rid of huge boulders.

461 Let it also be clearly understood that the Hunza

workers are good workers. They are not to be compared with the ordinary workers found throughout Pakistan and India. They do a day's work somewhat comparable to that done in the West. They are neither slouchers nor slackers. 461

All along the route there were groups of men working here and there. At this time of the year there were not too many employed or working on the roads and this is understandable. Every man in Hunza and Nagir must provide for the winter. Remember, there is, broadly speaking, no money and the only means he has of providing is by the work done with his own two hands. 464 491

The dried apricots and other fruits that he may put away, the wheat or the barley or the buckwheat that he stores in his house, the few roots that he puts into his root cellar are his means of sustenance until next spring. So you can readily understand that there is no great surplus of Hunzans or Nagiriwals during the months of July and August to do work on the roads and I know that the Hunza Road is not maintained by the State of Pakistan. Therefore there would be little or no money forthcoming and those who did work would probably be donating their time. Or perhaps their work would be somewhat similar to a type of taxation, although I dislike using that word when referring to or talking about the people of Hunza! [251]

We were more than a sauntering hour reaching Altit. If you've got any ideas about easy walking in this land, you'd better forget them. 487

As is usual on the entire Hunza trail, with few exceptions, it was climbing or descending all the time. The few places where you were neither climbing nor going down, you were walking along the river bed. In midsummer when the glaciers are melting quickly you

487 often get a sudden heavy flow of water and these rivers get deeper and broader and flood the roads. But then later, when it gets a bit cooler or cloudy, the river recedes and the river bed is again used as a road.

The alternative for the river bed is to climb hundreds or thousands of feet up along a road cut in the rock of the mountain or where a ledge might have been formed. When it is impossible to walk along the river bed, and this occurs regularly, in some places you must climb a few thousand feet . . . that is the only way you can continue your journey.

No matter how difficult, how dangerous or treacherous a roadway may be, there are some people who must get across, who must make their journey at that time. It is true everywhere in the world.

Therefore, when traveling on such terrain, it is positively advisable to try to get there and do your traveling when the rivers are not in flood. You can see why the river bed is preferable.

361 Altit is the name of the town wherein is located the old Altit Fort which was built in the thirteenth century. I don't know whether or not the other members of the party will agree with me but I did think that Altit was an exceptionally clean, tidy and orderly town. It was one of the first villages in Hunza to be settled because the area consists of a wide level, arable stretch of land almost two miles wide from the mountain wall to the bank of the river and here the drop was sheer—straight down for a thousand feet or more.

Oh, yes, all Hunza villages are clean and orderly but somehow it struck me that Altit was better then most. [644] Perhaps the Mir knew this and that is why he had his picnic bungalow built there. I am convinced that Altit was the most attractive village I found in the entire country.

graphically as possible one day's journey through these mountains. 133

There is little beauty to be seen until one gets beyond Nomal. I felt that the enchantment of the mountain terrain did not begin until we reached Chalt. From there to Baltit was one bit of indescribable grandeur after another.

From broad undulating valleys and river beds you suddenly come to a place where the mountain walls seem to come together to form a gorge. Here the river churned and frothed in its azure murkiness. The dark rock walls in all their sharp angled beauty presented an awesome spectacle and gave one the feeling of being suddenly closed in. For thousands of feet upward, shelves, abutments, butts, curves and gradings swept on in seemingly never-ending succession. Not a tuft of grass or even a bit of green moss or lichen could be seen by the naked eye. 'Twas bare but still beautiful . . . unadorned, but bejewelled. Then above were the light and clouds . . . and beyond, the blue sky and occasionally the sun could be seen.

The road would climb, weave and wind. It would broaden to 3, 4, or even 5 feet. Then 'twould narrow down sometimes to a bare 14 inches where the outside shoulder of the road had collapsed or fallen away, leaving a ragged, rugged edge which one took good care to avoid. 133 487

In places where the trail all but disappeared the solid rock face of the mountain wall had been chipped away or incut to allow a body or a small animal to pass. One had to crane one's neck or stoop to prevent a whack on the head that could send you hurtling down thousands of feet.

Continually there were patches of scree or moraine that might be a hundred feet or a mile or more in

7:Tobe C,T-3 (1959)1960 AV7 Burusho AV7
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133 length. Over this the horses clattered judiciously, plac-
487 ing one foot down firmly somewhere before they lifted another. 'Twas the only way they could maneuver through this pebble and rock dashed remains of a slide. Masses of mountains dimmed in the distance.

Now and then a nullah would leap into view and
[491] had to be crossed or forded. Yes, many of them, the more or less permanent ones, were covered by bridges . . . some sound, durable and strong and others, more or less makeshift, which one had to cross with prudence and yet alacrity.

133 Whenever a rafik hove into view, I unconsciously
487 would suck in my breath quickly and steel myself for
491 the mental ordeal to come. There I knew the trail was held up or was maintained by a few slabs of rock pressed into fissures on the rock surface of the cliff or even a built up wall of stones, laid carefully one on top of another without being cemented in any way. At other times there were rods of steel driven into the rock surface and upon this the boards or road was laid. How these supports held, heaven only knows and there they were, jutting out over emptiness or nothingness. Did they fall away? Was there any danger? Well, you can answer that question for yourself. If you were going to travel along the trail to Hunza, they had to be crossed and the fact that they were continually being erected was ample proof that they were continually falling away.

133 In many places the road ribbons to a narrow ledge
487 along a precarious outcropping of rock . . . courses that have been cut and built into the very face of the sheer and protruding cliffs, and many from a few hundred to many thousands of feet above the valley floor and often more than 15,000 feet above sea level. Landslides, washouts, rains of gigantic boulders, disintegra-

tion of rafiks have played havoc with travelers and caravans on this route since the first enterprising man inched his way across. Yet then and now bold, brave, fearless men were attracted and fascinated by the call to the serene loveliness, adventure and danger. 133 487

Then islands of greenery began to appear more frequently. These were the terraced fields, the oases that marked the villages. It was a pinpoint of light in a sea of darkness where rest, drink and food could be found, even if unappetizing and unabundant. These spots of green at sky-line-blue heights, among the millions of acres of barren rock and emptiness were pleasing both to the eye and soul and comforting, too, for the traveler. 133 311

Elsewhere, in the Hindu Kush or the Himalayas, could be found verdant valleys and hills and mountaintops that were furry and treed. But in the harsh, bleak, black Karakorums, such heavenly blessings could seldom, if ever, be found. Even the terraced tiny green fields could not, by any stretch of the imagination, be compared to a tree-covered hillside or mountain. Yet, let it not be said or thought that these bleak, barren hills did not have their loveliness and charm. They possessed beauty! Yes, they did! Like a tiger, 'twas fierce, sharp and untamed, but nevertheless, true beauty!

In the distance, one could always watch as the hills rolled, soared, dipped and then fell away to merge with the blue of the horizon. I know at times, allowing my vision to soar and wander about the mountains in the distance, my fatigue and weariness were forgotten and I plodded on, unmindful of the trail. My mind soared from peak to peak—some cloud-haloed, others bold and sharply defined. 133 487

One was always meeting the Hunza River, either face to face or having it course along at your side. Then,

133 too, as you rose where the road led on high crests, you
487 could see the river winding, twisting, bending in the distance and you knew that you would be there soon—in an hour or a few.

As you course your way along the trail, you see the snow and ice covered mountain ranges with their glorious majestic crests gleaming in slides of silvery softness. You follow a road, that was known for at least a thousand years as a snaking, curving road of exceptional beauty, mid towering heights, nameless peaks and grave hazards.

487 'Twas but a scant few decades ago—yes, even that
439 short a time—that one or two successful caravan trading trips, winding their way from China to the Khyber Pass via Peshawar, Pindi, Gilgit and the Hunza and Nagir Valleys, could make a trader rich, if he could get through without mishap and avoid being robbed by brigands.

The camel caravans would be laden with silks, gaily colored cloth, clothing, tea, porcelain, earthenware, jewels, gold and silver, ivory, salt, sweetening, spices, trinkets and bottles, fancy slippers, foot coverings, vases, trays and fancily inscribed artware, bars of iron and steel, knives, cooking utensils.

On this caravan route, animals do not walk side by side, but one behind the other.

[648] It is no wonder that the owners of the caravans were glad to pay tribute for safe conduct through these defiles and passes.

We met caravans but they were evidently coming from the Pamirs and heading towards Gilgit, Peshawar and Srinagar. They were good sized ones with many donkeys and camels. The altitude wasn't high enough for yaks.

They looked sort of nondescript to me. I thought

they would be more interesting. But what can one expect from hard working travelers through a wicked terrain? They didn't look rich or impressive, but I was forced to admit that it did take courage and determination. 'Twas not meat for a weak man. 487 439

It occurred to me that a caravan would not be easy picking for a bandit or bandits. They'd best have superiority of numbers because men with weak stomachs or weak heads don't travel in caravans.

What is the lure that mountains hold for many men? I've learned that they can be as beautiful, as enchanting, as alluring and yes, even as demanding and possessive as any woman. I have never known a man who went to his death for a woman, but I have read and known of many who went to their death for a mountain . . . Nanga Parbat, especially. 000

They must exert a tremendous influence over man. And it is a fascination that never wears off. It's easy not to fall in love with them as long as you have never seen them and been among them but, if you are so unfortunate as to have made their acquaintance and mingled in their company, then you are lost. You will never be indifferent to their charms again. They'll permeate your heart and soul and penetrate reaches that you never knew you owned—and you own them no longer, for they are possessed by peaks and snows and summits and glaciers. You will never again know rest or settling down, for the glaciers' gleam has struck home and to it you will have to return!

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7:Tobe C,T-3 (1959)1960 AV7 Burusho AV7
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CHAPTER 58

Baltit to Chalt--A Long Hard Day

THE EXHILARATING morning mountain air and the expanse of blue sky, landscaped by undulating masses in the distance and sparkled with a wisp of cloud here and there, made the march seem like a living dream. How often since I have been home have I longed for a day to begin this way. 122 487

The climb into the mountains started the minute we crossed the bridge at Hasanabad. We were now taking the trail that had almost spelled disaster for me on the way in. Those twists, those turns, those climbs, those declines had just about worn my legs to stubs. Never, through all my years of work, had I ever known what the word "tired" meant until then!

As Friend Cec remarked a few days later when we discussed this part of the journey, "Never did I see you look so grim! If any man could be said to be dragging his rear, it was you when you reached the jeep!"

But now it was entirely different. I didn't regard the snaky curves and loops with distrust and misgivings as I had the other day. In fact, then, I remember hating every turn I had to take. Now, with a good mount between my legs, I felt elated, happy, cheerful. Even though I started off riding, I knew that I wouldn't ride very far because I enjoy walking too much. But, still, it was mighty nice to know that you had a good horse in case you needed it.

From the start in the morning we knew it was to be a hard ride if we wanted to get to Chalt in one march. There was a full 32 miles to go. It was actually 36 miles but I figured the jeep had driven us 4 of them so that left 32.

Neither Cec nor I discussed or mentioned it but I think we fully realized that, if we felt it was going to be too tough, we could stop off at Minapin which was but 15 miles away and would find the usual rest houses there. Yet, I couldn't see myself holing up at Minapin for the night. Why, we should be there shortly after noon, I figured, and I certainly had no intention of calling it quits then.

Besides, my recollections of Minapin weren't very appealing. It was the poorest looking and the dirtiest town of all we had passed through. We had stopped for a few minutes at the rest house on the way up and it had proved to be a disappointment. We couldn't get anything to eat there and the chowkidor expected a handsome donation because we stopped there and, I believe, had a glass of water.

Then, too, I knew that this was the stage for us to make time, as we'd have more protection from the sun because there were more trees in this area than there would be further down. Villages dotted the landscape as this was one of the more fertile districts and towns

7:Tobe C, T-3 (1959)1960 AV7 Burusho AV7
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and villages are invariably built where there are trees of one kind or another. So it was our best bet to tackle the sun while we had some protection against it.

I remembered also that in this area there were lots of nullahs and that conduits were found everywhere, so we could refresh ourselves with good fresh cold water all along the route. Further down there were very few nullahs or any other means of getting water except by marching down to the river's edge and this, friend, could be an undertaking!

At this stage the elevation ranged around 7,000 to 10,000 feet. I didn't carry an altimeter with me but I was informed that in some places we climbed to 12,000 feet. It certainly felt like it by the rarity of the atmosphere and the way my chest and lungs were behaving.

All through this broad area the mountain scenery is idyllic. It just can't be beat or improved upon, no matter where in the world you go. When I came up this selfsame trail on the inward trek, I was in no mood to appreciate beauty or mountain grandeur and I knew that I hadn't taken in very much. But now, I was determined to feast my eyes, my heart and my soul on the most beautiful, the most varied, the most awe-inspiring mountain vastness that is known to exist.

I was happy—I was carefree—I felt so light that I thought the horse wouldn't even know he was carrying a passenger. In all probabilities I'd never come this way again and I wanted that beauty engraved on my memory.

Through the years I had spent many weeks and months in the Rockies, from Alaska right down to the Mexican Sierras, and I believed the Rockies to be the most impressive range of mountains I had ever known. When I saw the Alps and compared them, well, there

7:Tobe C,T-3 (1959)1960 AV7 Burusho AV7
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I found the Rani to be the most beautiful woman in Hunza. I didn't dare ask her age, but I know she was married to the present Mir in 1934. Therefore she must be close to or in her 40's. She could undoubtedly pass with any woman in her early 20's. Buf there were few, if any, women in Hunza like her.

I further will grant that I, or anyone else for that matter, would have very little opportunity of seeing Hunzan women at what might oe their best. To state my views candidly, I'd say the men definitely looked youthful, but the women looked to be older than their years.

Perfect health—I have never seen, as yet, a race of people that was as healthy as the people of Hunza. But to say that they were a race that enjoyed perfect health, I would consider a bit of an exaggeration, because the doctor does treat a few patients now and then and the hospital does harbor a few sick people. I must honestly admit that I did not see any sick people in Hunza, but there are quite a few who do not enjoy perfect health.

A pre-Bronze Age people—Here I suspect someone wanted to show his knowledge in archeology or anthropology, whichever it may be. (I am expressing my ignorance to begin with.) They are no more Bronze Age than was the writer who referred to them as such. This would take them back between 4,000 and 5,000 years which is utter and sheer "poppycock." He further stated that they were isolated for 2,000 years. If that is true, they were isolated because they wanted to remain that way.

It is a fact that there is a caravan trail right through Hunza. It is the shortest route from China to Persia and leads through Hunza, past Gilgit and across the Babusar Pass and then on westward or southwestward.

7:Tobe C,T-3 (1959)1960 AV7 Burusho AV7
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487 177 I am sure that a people who saw these caravans coming and going could not be called isolated by any stretch of the imagination. They just like their little piece of paradise too well to leave it.

133 *Hunza empties into the Indus.* Two famed writers who should know better . . . or should I say, should have checked more closely . . . made the statement that the Hunza River flows into the Indus. Even a cursory glance at a map would show that the Hunza empties into the Gilgit and the Gilgit empties into the Indus.

585 *Mother-in-law taken along on honeymoon*—This bit of stupidity, or should I say absurdity, appeared in no less than two of the foremost publications in America.

Who ever heard of a honeymoon in Hunza? Not having a Niagara Falls, probably they'd go up and sit on top of Rakaposhi with the mother-in-law between them to cool their ardor.

When the Mir made this statement, he was joking, never believing for a moment that anyone would take such a broad joke as being factual.

481 147 *Hunzans walk 60 to 100 miles as though it were nothing.* In fact, one author stated somewhere that the Hunzans could walk 60 miles easier than she could walk upstairs.

I will readily grant that I believe the Hunzan people are the world's best walkers and well they would have to be, because there just happens to be no other mode of locomotion. I'll even go further and say that all through my travels in that territory I did not once see a Hunzan man, or for that matter a Nagirwal, who appeared to be worn from the rugged walks and climbs. So it is clear that they have tremendous reserves of energy and stamina . . . but let's not go overboard!

486 114 *Anyone can visit Hunza.* Contrary to the assertion made by one writer that anyone can get into Hunza, I

8 Clark N-5 (1948-1951) 1953 AV7 Burushо AV7
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[P. 38]

[caption appears at the bottom of photograph on p. 38-A]

8:Clark N-5 (1948-1951) 1963
AV7 Buzubo AV7
Hunza
[P. 41-B]

beliefs about "the Healthy Hunzas."

Altogether, I was able to treat 5,680 medical cases—the country had no other dispensary—during my stay in Hunza. My daily group of patients did not suffer from many of the diseases common to our civilization. There were no true neurotics; no cases of stomach ulcers, appendicitis, or gout; only one case of cerebral hemorrhage, and but four cardiac cases. The few bad hearts had been damaged either by malarial anemia or by overexertion at high altitudes, as was the case with one man who had carried the Mir's piano on his back up twenty miles of mountain trail. On the other hand, my Hunza patients did have malaria. They also had at least two kinds of interstinal worms, and to see for the first time a man with *Ascaris*

4: Durand G-3 (1888-93) 1900 AV1 Kashmir
Burusho AV7

ness of their uncomfortable houses leaves an indelible mark on the national character.

It must be remembered that a house in the Hindu-Kush has no glass windows, no comfortable fire-place and chimney corner. The better-class houses are built round a courtyard, but the rooms rarely have windows, all light comes from the open door or from a skylight. Immediately below the skylight is a square open hearth, on which smoulders a fire; round this run raised platforms, on which are the beds and household paraphernalia; the smoke, before escaping through the roof, fills the whole room, blackens walls and pillars, and chokes the unfortunate inhabitants. If it is very cold, or raining and snowing heavily, the skylight is shut, the room is in pitchy darkness but for a sputtering torch, and the atmosphere horrible. It is no wonder that an existence under these circumstances should be rather depressing, and in Nagar the people get the full benefit of it, for there are several villages which during December and January only get twenty minutes' sun a day; some, I believe, get none. The men having no agricultural work on hand, owing to the land being frost-bound, there is practically nothing for them to do during the winter months but to sit idly round their smouldering fires for about sixteen hours out of the twenty-four.

Nagar has practically no outlet except down the river to Gilgit. Shut in to the east by impassable mountains, and to the south by the great Rakapushi range, there is only the bare possibility of reaching Baltistan by the Hispar pass: there is a tradition that the road was once used, but it is very doubtful if

4: Durand G-3 (1888-93) 1900 AV1 Kashmir
Burush. AV7

the story is true. It needs a mountaineer properly equipped to make use of this road, which runs over one of the greatest glacier masses of the world, as Sir Martin Conway shows in his book, "Climbing and Exploration in the Karakoram Himalayas." Dependent therefore on Gilgit for their luxuries, such as weapons, cotton cloth, salt, sugar, etc., most of them the produce of India, or on Hunza for the products of Turkestan and Central Asia, the Nagar people were more easily squeezable than their neighbours across the water, and not so aggressively insolent in their dealings with Kashmir. They were as little to be trusted, however. It was one of their chiefs who many years ago called in the Kashmir arms to help him break his rival Thum, and who, once the Kashmiris were well within the country, fraternised with his enemy, and turned upon his late allies; and Nagar forces had played a prominent part in the disturbances of the past year. The want of dash on the part of the Nagar warriors was well marked on the former occasion; no badly-disciplined army, abandoned by its chiefs as were the Kashmir forces in the former case, should have been able to escape. Pathans would have wiped them out to a man, even Chitralis would have inflicted terrible loss, but the Nagar men allowed their enemies to get out of the country scathless, and even to save, owing to the gallantry of one officer, their small mountain guns carried by coolies. These were points which were worth considering and laying up for future guidance.

4: Durand G-3 (1888-93) 1900 AV1 Kashmir
Burusho Av 7

491 sisting only of the foot rope and one side rope, and have crossed them when the connecting ropes were broken and useless, but I never did so willingly, for we had a terrible lesson. A native officer and half a dozen men had been sent on from Gilgit ahead of us to try the bridges, and to arrange for necessary repairs. Coming to one bridge they tried it carefully, going over one at a time, and examining the anchorage and ropes. Thinking all was sound they foolishly returned in a body, crossing, of course, one behind the other. As the leading man got well up the slope towards the timber anchorage, followed by five others, the ropes drew or broke, and the whole party were dashed into the water. Two men, entangled in the ropes, were washed ashore on the bank they had started from, for the anchorages on the far side fortunately held, and the ropes swung across the stream and ashore, but the other unfortunates, caught in the awful torrent, were swept away and instantly drowned. Only one body was recovered, and that forty miles down stream.

● 457 The road shortly after crossing the river rose twelve hundred feet to cross the end of a spur from Rakapushi, and, descending again, ran generally at a level of six or eight hundred feet above the river — which one could hear roaring through its deep-cut bed below—across uncultivated wastes, and in and out of numerous deep ravines till the cultiva-
644 tion of Nilt was reached. Here Uzr Khan, the eldest living son, and the heir-apparent of the ruling chief. Jafr Khan, met us. He was rather a fine-looking fellow, with a pleasant enough face

4: Durand G-3 (1888-93) 1900 AV1 Kashmir
Burusho AV7

when he smiled, but with generally a boorish and sulky expression. He received us very cordially, and after we had breakfasted under a fine plane tree he came and discussed affairs. I could see that my main difficulty would be to persuade my new friends that we had come to Gilgit to stay. Biddulph's withdrawal had made them very chary of having anything to do with us.

I examined the country very carefully as we marched, and noted the difficulty of the great ravine behind Nilt, which three years later was to baffle for eighteen days the attack of our troops. On the whole the road was better than I expected, and it seemed to me, as I find noted in my diary, "that a decently-armed and led force should not have much difficulty in forcing its way in." My hosts were not averse to my sketching, and I had a road sketch and report made every day, but I did not like to make too much of it, and contented myself personally with noting the positions and the chances of attack they offered. The conclusion I eventually arrived at was that the Hunza-Nagar country presented the most appalling difficulties, and that, with well-armed men holding the country, an advance into it would be terribly costly.

The views of Rakapushi were very fine, though not so grand as I had hoped, for we were marching too close under it. Still, a mountain rising nineteen thousand feet above you, and over twenty-five thousand feet in height, must be fine when you get a glimpse of it. The next day's march was, however, far more striking; the road rose over gigantic moraine masses, crossing ravine after ravine

4: Durand G-3 (1888-93) 1900 AV1 Kashmir
Burushe AV7

133 seven and eight hundred feet deep, each one filled
487 up by the end of a glacier, the main mass of which was out of sight. We passed through numerous
361 villages whose cultivation, carried far up the moun-
241 tain side, was of the richest. Each village was surrounded by fruit trees, and poplar, plane, and
[712] walnut trees abounded. Every village was either enclosed in a large square fort, with towers at each corner, or had a fort close to it.

133 The third day took us into Nagar. On leaving camp we crossed a great shingle slope, nearly a mile in length, at a point hundreds of feet above the river. Huge cliffs crowned the slope, and made this one of the most difficult pieces of road, from a military point of view, that we had yet passed. During our two last marches we saw conglomerate cliffs and rocks full of garnets, some very fine white sandstone, and in one place a cliff of clay, which was said to be full of
[361] gold. Nagar lies off the main valley, some three
[241] miles up another stream, and the last few miles into it the road ran almost without interruption through cultivation. The fruit trees were a sight to see, apricot trees bending under a burden of red gold fruit, their harvest just beginning, and every house roof, and any other available flat space, was covered with the fruit drying in the sun. As we turned our backs on the main valley the view was superb.
133 Behind us Rukapushi rose in gigantic precipices of
241 thousands of feet of snow and ice, while across the
361 river above Hunza towered another great mountain, its crest broken by sharp granite peaks on which no snow can rest. Its lower spurs are jagged and bare, and below them lay a large semi-circle, one mass of

4: Durand G-3 (1888-93) 1900 AV1 Kashmir
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000 with Safdar Ali, whose cruelty was unrelieved by any redeeming feature. When the end came, three years later, and he fled like the coward he was without striking a blow, the feelings of the people towards him were well shown; there was a general sigh of relief throughout the country. Daulat Shah may have missed him, for when I next visited Hunza I heard, with some pardonable satisfaction, that amongst the men carrying stones to build a block house, my orderlies had recognised our old friend.

• 487 The last marches out of Hunza were very severe, the road even for the Hindu-Kush was bad; it was perpetually crossing parris with frightful drops or very steep slopes into the river, and it was so narrow that the coolies carrying loads were in constant danger. Fortunately for us the cloudy weather continued, and on the last day we had some rain. The views in consequence were exquisite. All the colouring of the hills, the pale reds and browns and soft shades of green, which are merged by glaring sunlight into one uniform grey, now showed out. The view up the Chaprot valley was particularly fine, heavy clouds lay in a great bar across the mountains, dropping transparent veils of falling rain, through which range after range showed out with delicately softened outline. It was a delightful march, none the less so from my feeling that I had brought my party out of the country safely, and had been able to avoid any 361 serious trouble. We left Hunza territory at the 441 village of Budlas, crossing a heavy torrent by a new bridge, built on the site of the one where the 000 sad accident referred to above had taken place. I

~~30~~ Biddulph G-3 (1873-1878) 1880 ~~AU3 Afghanistan AU2~~
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When Cashmere authority was temporarily
expelled from Gilgit, between 1852 and 1860, communication 648
with Nager was maintained by this road. In the prosperous 186
times of the Shin rule, the Thums of Nager acknowledged the Ras of Gilgit as their feudal superiors, and tradition relates that the villages of Nilt, Gulmit, Toll, and Pussunt, which now belong to Nager, were given as dowries to different Thums who married daughters of the Trakhané. At the time of the Sikh occupation of Gilgit a very close connection existed between the rulers of the two states of Gilgit and Nager. Between Hunza and Nager a great rivalry, which has frequently resulted in open hostility, has always existed, but they are generally ready to combine against an external foe. Though possessing a common origin, the people of Nager are distinguished for timidity and incapacity for war, and no instance is recorded of their being victorious over their rivals of Hunza, at whose hands they have suffered many disastrous defeats. The people of Nager are Shiahs, [795]
and slavery does not exist among them. Since 1868 Nager has been tributary to Cashmere, to which it makes an annual payment of twenty-one tolas of gold and two baskets of apricots.

Between the two states the river flows between perpendi- 131
cular banks, 300 feet high and 600 feet apart at the top. The banks can only be ascended in a few places, which are carefully guarded.

Hunza, which comprises a considerable extent of terri- 133
tory, has an agricultural population of about 6,000 souls. [161]
North of the great range of peaks which bisects the principality from south-east to north-west the country opens out into rolling grass steppes, supporting a scattered pastoral population. Here the great wild sheep (*O. Poli*) roams in large herds. This tract is known as Little Goohjal, to distinguish it from Wakhan, which, south of the Hindoo Koosh, is known as Goohjal proper.

From the north-east the Shimshal stream, draining the valley of that name, brings down a great volume of water in summer, and effectually closes all access from the south, except to men on foot. The only direct route in summer to 487
the Shimshal Valley from the south, is by the high and difficult Moorkôn Pass, which is only open for two months in the year. From the head of the Shimshal Valley a road, only passable for men on foot, leads to Koolanooldi in the Yarkund Valley. It was by this road that attacks on the caravans were organised. Another route leads by a somewhat

22g Biddulph G-3 (1873-1878) 1880 AU1 Afghanistan AU1
4 AV3 Dard
Burusho AV7

difficult pass on to the Shimshal Pamir, from whence a road goes to Ujadbai in the Sirikol Valley. On this Pamir dwell a number of Kirghiz, who pay tribute to the Thum of Hunza, and here the wild yák (*P. grunniens*) and the kyang (*E. Hemionus*) find their most western limit. The Pamir appears to lie north-west and south-east. From its north side the Kara Kuchkar Pass leads to Raskum, once a flourishing settlement, situated on one of the many branches which form the south-western source of the Yarkund River. Considerably further to the north-east are the two small communities of Pakpooh and Shakshooh, situated on different tributary streams. Pakpooh is said to contain about 4,000 and Shakshooh about 5,000 souls, and they are situated respectively at an elevation of about 10,000 and 9,000 feet. Both pay tribute to the ruler of Hunza. These curious people, of whom very little is known, are of Aryan race, and are described as being of very fair and ruddy complexion. Their language is Chagatai Turki, but, like the Ghalchah tribes of Sirikol and the countries north of the Hindoo Koosh to the westward, many of them speak Persian also. Dr. Bellew,[1] who met some men of the tribe, speaks of them as being a tall, very fair, and handsome race, of a purely Aryan physiognomy, and describes them as poorly clad, carrying matchlocks, of timid and subdued demeanour, and very cautious of giving any information regarding themselves. He mentions that they spoke Turki to other people, but conversed among themselves in a totally different language. He says that they are Mussulmans of the Shiah sect, like the Wakhis and Badakhshis,—that is, Maulais.

Nearly due north of Hunza is the small mountain state of Sirikol. The rulers of the two states have ever maintained a close friendship in spite of the mountains which separate them. From Girtchah in Goohjal, Tashkurgan is reached in eight days. Horses can only travel by the Kilik route, which is longer than that by the Kirish Pass; but the road is excellent and open all the year to both horses and camels. For about two months in summer the road by Misgar is impracticable for horses on account of the depth of the stream that has to be forded. The route by Rishipjerab and Derdee is then used, but men on foot can travel by Misgar at all times. Good roads also lead to Lungar and Kabr-i-Bosai in Wakhan territory.

In Wakhan, Sirikol, and Yarkund, the name of Kunjoot

[1] Bellew's *Kashmir and Kashghar*.